SOPHIA Learning

REL1001: Approaches to Studying Religions (3 semester credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Students in this course gain mastery of the basic concepts integral to the study of religion and will learn how these concepts apply in real world situations. Students will analyze key components of religions as they apply to a range of different belief systems and will explore the role of religion in modern society.

Course Effective Dates: March 2018 – Present

Prerequisite(s): Entry level Gen Ed course – no prerequisites

Length of course: This is a self-paced course. Students have 60 days with an additional 30 day extension (if needed) to complete the course.

ACE CREDIT® Recommendation: In the lower-division baccalaureate/associate degree category, 3 semester hours in religions or humanities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:
1. Investigate the major approaches to studying religion.
2. Identify common elements of religions.
3. Analyze religion’s impact on individuals, society, and the world.
4. Evaluate social, ethical, and cultural topics through the lens of religion.

OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS
· Purposes for Studying Religions
· Reasons for Studying Religion
· Role of Religion in Modern Life
· The Religious Impulse
· Religion and the Individual
· Religion and Origins
· Religion and the Family
· Religion and Society
· Defining Religion
· What is Religion?
· "Origins” of Religion
· Religion as Myth
· Religion as Culture & Social Convention
· The Sacred and the Profane
· A "Definition" of Religion
· An Overview of Religions
· Categorizing Religions
· Primal Religions
· Judaism
· Christianity
· Islam
· Hinduism
Confucianism
Buddhism
Other Eastern Religions
Approaches and Methods of Studying World Religions
Phenomenology
Theology
Historical Approaches
Comparative Religion
Philosophy of Religion
Sociology of Religion
Common Elements of Religions
Sacred & Transcendent
Summum Bonum
Judaism- Yahweh
Christianity- Trinity
Islam- Allah
Hinduism - Brahman/Atman
Taoism - The Tao
The Transcendent in Primal Religions
The Problem
Suffering
Sin
Death
Evil
The Solution
Mysticism
Sacramentalism
Silence
Action
Religious Narratives
Transmission of the Teaching
The Nature of Religious Narratives
Early Creation Stories
Parable, Myth, and Allegory
Revelations
Philosophy and Doctrine of World Religions
Animism and Related Beliefs
Monotheism
Theism vs. Deism
Polytheism & Henotheism
Atheism
Non-Theism
Religions impact on Individuals, Society, and the World
Fear and Wonder: Ultimate Questions
Death and Eternity
Social Convention
Humanism, Atheism, and Nihilism
Gender
· Economics
· Law
· Family Structure
· Societal Structure
· Morality & Ethics
· Marriage, Family and Sexuality
· War and Peace
· Duties and Law
· The Environment
· Overview of Ritual & Material Culture
· Holy Places
· Architecture
· Festivals
· Pilgrimages
· Life Cycle Events
· Sacred Objects
· Religion in Government
· Religious States
· Separation of Church and State
· National Religions
· Religious & Political Issues
· Atheistic States
· Religion in Global Affairs
· Many "Worlds" in One
· Religious Wars & Violence
· Liberation Theology, Economic Inequality, and Social Justice
· Religious Inclusion and Exclusion

**GRADING**
This is a pass/fail course. Students are required to complete all 12 formative and 4 summative assessments with an overall course average of 70% or better.